Foreword

As a pastor in New York City, I work with Christians who yearn to make sense of their world. They actively engage their work because in it they find a strong sense of meaning. Unfor-tunately, these Christians often struggle with how to connect their faith with the world they actually inhabit for the vast majority of their waking hours. Many have grown up in churches that have essentially taught them that the only things that really matter in the end are saved souls. The net result of this kind of thinking is a disenfranchising dissociation between two important parts of their lives— their faith and their work. Over time, this tension inevitably fades as the increasing irrelevance of the Christian message often leads them to abandon not their faith, but the church.

There exists a deep hunger amongst Christians for an authentic faith that integrates the whole of life, connecting sincere piety with the complex public reality that people face each day. Six years ago I was hired by Redeemer Presbyterian Church to launch what became a nine-month leadership program for young professionals, focusing upon theological, spiritual, and community formation and integration. Participants would have to commit significant time and financial resources to be a part of the program. With considerable amounts of reading each week, as well as three challenging projects, we initially wondered whether over-scheduled, commitment-adverse New Yorkers would actually sign up for a program like this. In the last six years we were surprised to discover the answer to that question has been a resounding yes.

What has been profoundly reinforced in my mind over the years is that theology matters. When people discover a rich theology that connects what they have previously perceived as unrelated and irreconcilable parts of their lives, they experience a renewed passion for their faith and their work.
Christians become excited about the gospel in a whole new way because they see how this hope applies not only to their own hearts and relationships but also to the world around them. They start to see how their work connects to the flourishing of the city and how the choices they make each day can have important economic implications. They begin to realize that the gospel does indeed speak powerfully into the economics of our modern, complex, pluralistic, multi-cultural world.
There is an overwhelming need for a deep and nuanced theology that articulates the reasons for the hope we have in

Christ in every sphere of life. I have been greatly encouraged over the years to see churches from diverse denominational backgrounds desiring to deepen their theological resources. They too realize that faith and work integration requires a lot more than simply new programs, conferences, and studies. They want to ground Christians in a biblically rich framework that integrates the whole of their lives. In

the past, typically para-church organizations have responded to this need, but I am seeing a whole new wave of churches that are taking up this charge to equip their people theologically and vocationally. This is an exciting movement because this kind of integration becomes much more effective when it's reinforced and lived in a dynamic community.
To this end, the book you hold in your hands is a very helpful primer, but don't mistake primer to mean elem-entary. As you will quickly discover, it

is theologically rich and deep. While it doesn't promise to give you quick and easy answers, it will open your eyes to a way of connecting the Bible to our world today. This is not an easy task, and we need a skilled guide like John Bolt, whose mind has been deeply soaked in Scripture, and the best articulations of the Reformed faith from theologians like John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, and Herman Bavinck. I hope this is the first of a score of books that will help bridge the gulf that exists for many between the Bible and our world today. I am deeply grateful for gifted theologians like Bolt who bring to life God's sovereignty over the whole of this world.
David H. Kim
Executive Director, The Center for Faith &
Work
Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC
September 2013

Preface

When Stephen Grabill invited me to write the Reformed volume in this series of primers on work and econom-ics, it took only a few moments of reflection to accept. In terms of my own writing, this volume parallels an earlier book, The Christian Story and the Christian School (1993), which was also a commissioned book that afforded me an opportunity to gather into one coherent narrative numerous essays, speeches to teachers' conventions, Christian school societies, and professional development days for Christian school teachers and administrators. Similarly, over the last two decades, I have been privileged to participate in numerous events at the Acton Institute and Acton University as listener/learner and as speaker/learner.
I have written about and lectured on the role of Christian faith in the public square, including economics, and have

focused my scholarly work on the neo-Calvinist thought of Abraham Kuyper, and especially Herman Bavinck. These are my credentials as well as my pas-sions.
I write as one who has been nurtured and nourished within the Reformed catholic Christian faith more broadly and in Dutch neo-Calvinism more particularly. I include the adjective "catholic" here deliberately in company with my own teacher Herman Bav-inck, who believed that being Reformed meant that one was a small c catholic

Christian. In one of his magisterial ad-dresses, "The Catholicity of Christianity and the Church" (1888), Bavinck made his case for considering the Reformed branch of Christianity as an expression of a comprehensive, all-inclusive faith that permeates every dimension of our existence as God's image bearers living in the creation he fashioned for his glory and human flourishing.

The Christian and Reformed faith is a comprehensive and public faith in the Triune God who created all things, redeems us in Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit is bringing all things to their final eschatological glory. I share that commitment and vision and this primer attempts to honor it.

It is a distinct privilege and responsibility for me to direct my attention especially to work and economics as a vital part of our Christian civic responsibility. I am a seminary teacher and now primarily a listener to sermons rather than an active preacher. I have long had a concern that ministers in the denomination I serve be better informed about basic economics. We devote a great deal of our denominational time and financial resources to issues of social justice and poverty/hunger in particular. God be praised for the compassionate hearts and willing hands that reach out to hungry and hurt-

ing people. But compassion ought to be informed; good intentions often have unintended consequences that make things worse by, among other things, creating dependency and destroying initiative. This is particularly true when global judgments are made and major structural changes are advocated in the name of the church. And that is why I have written this little book. My goal is to raise questions, to encourage second thoughts, and to invite discussion. I hope to educate, encourage, inspire, and motivate all Reformed Christians to a more informed discipleship in their vocations and civic responsibilities.

I am not an economist but a theolo-gian, and this volume is not a substitute for picking up a basic economics text like Thomas Sowell's Basic Economics or a superb Christian perspective on economics such as Victor Claar and Robin Klay's Economics in Christian Perspective.

With all due respect to Christian econo-

mists, I do not necessarily consider this a deficiency or a sin against academic sphere sovereignty. After all, the purpose of this series of books is not to contribute to social science scholarship but to inform lay Christian audiences of the connection between our Christian faith and the world of work and economics. If someone who is not an economist cannot explain that connection, then non-economists are not likely to be able to understand it. I believe that the key elements of economics can be understood and explained by anyone who has the desire to do so.

Of course, I do not claim that understanding the basics, and knowing the required conditions for economic flourishing will necessarily and easily lead to societies that actually accomplish it.
And here the help of theology is es-sential; economists need theologians as much as theologians who write about faith and work need economists. What

does the Christian faith teach us about human nature? How does the reality of sin affect the degree to which we can achieve economic shalom in this dis-pensation? If we reject an eschatological reserve and demand more than can be achieved in this life, how do we then
—with every good intention in place!— avoid the horrific track record of failed utopias that spill oceans of blood and create mountains of misery? Mistakes in advocacy, especially when done in the name of Christ, have terribly serious consequences, not the least because they discredit the gospel itself. I write, therefore, as a theologian with a strong interest in matters of public polity and economy who has a modest track record of teaching and publication in the area.
A brief word or two is in order about my own journey and particular intellectual debts in the area of eco-nomics. I came to Calvin College and Seminary in the late 1960s as a Can-

adian student with certain typically Canadian biases against the American experiment in ordered liberty. At the same time, the Dutch-Canadian immigrant community in which I grew up was politically unsophisticated but generally conservative and definitely not socialist. Post-World War II experiences with an increasingly bureaucratically ordered life had definitely shaped that bias. However, during my college and seminary years, the Vietnam War and especially the American civil rights movement so dominated the public world of my student life that I was gently drawn to aspects of the counter-cultural critique of America as the lead society of the capitalist West. In par-ticular, the problem of world hunger and the imperative of a simple lifestyle that rejected consumerism captured my imagination and moral conscience. The so-called "American way" troubled me;

I was tentatively drawn to Christian socialism as an alternative.
All that changed for me in the 1980s. Remarkably, I was initially disappointed in Ronald Reagan's victory over Jimmy Carter in the US presidential election of 1980. At the same time, the killing fields of Southeast Asia after the American pullout were troubling, and my reading turned to those who presented the moral case against twen-tieth-century totalitarianism-people such as Alexandyr Solzhenitsyn (One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich and The Gulag Archipelago), Armando Valla-dares (Against All Hope: The Prison Mem-oirs), and Nien Cheng (Life and Death in

Shanghai). At the same time, other writers, such as Malcolm Muggeridge (Winter in Moscow) and Paul Hollander (Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, 1928-1978) directed me to the troubling and tragic romance that left-

leaning Western intellectuals had with totalitarianism, all in the name of a more just and fair world. As I saw my own church in Canada increasingly insert itself into national and global political and economic issues, I began to wonder if much of that arose from the
same romance with utopian visions of the kingdom of God on earth. Though it appealed to the legacy of Abraham Kuyper, it did not strike me as very compatible with the Kuyperian understanding of the church's task. I did not yet, however, have a clear, well worked out alternative.
Dissatisfaction with Christian so-cialism, furthermore, did not satisfy my moral concerns about a more just social and economic order. Then I read Michael Novak's The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism. Novak set forth what he called "a theology of economics" in which he made a persuasive case for a threefold cord of free-market

economies operating in democratic societies with healthy moral-cultural in-stitutions. Here was a complete vision, rooted in liberty, with a high view of human beings as responsible image bearers of God, and that had, further-more, proved itself as an engine for prosperity. This was the vision of a moral political economy I had been looking for; moreover, it was realistic and anti-utopian. It was, in Novak's words, "a political economy for sinners." In addition to Novak, Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus's work on mediating structures in public policy (To Empower People) became for me a helpful new language for translating the insights of the neo-Kuyperian tradition into the North American context. After returning to live in Grand Rapids in 1989, this is what drew me to the Acton Institute after it was founded in 1990, and I have been honored to participate in many of its events, including repre-

senting Calvin Theological Seminary in sharing the sponsorship of a successful conference in October 1998, "The Legacy of Abraham Kuyper and Leo XIII: Commemorating over a Century of Christian Social Teaching." And finally, for ongoing and lasting influence, I would single out the thinker I judge to be the most important "public intellec-tual" in America today, the economist Thomas Sowell. Not only does Sowell make economics understandable, he explains real-world economic results in terms of a realistic anthropology with moral and cultural values that always ring true.

My colleagues, students, and friends will undoubtedly respond in bemusement that I have written a book that includes the word "shalom" in the title. I have on more than one occasion commented that the word is overused today. In my defense, the title preceded the request to write. However, I never

raised an objection to the title and see this volume as something of a gentle corrective to much of the writing that has filled the shalomological genre in recent years. If I may put it dir-ectly, my own intention was to write a book that describes and outlines real-world shalom, shalom as achievable and already achieved in part rather than an ideal shalom that is only future eschatological (or worse, utopian) hope. This opens up opportunity for conversation and dialogue because people of goodwill do disagree about what is achievable.

This volume, therefore, is not intended as the last word on the subject, and I know that even close friends and colleagues will find points with which to disagree. I welcome that, in fact, because I have found over and over again that we never grow in our understanding by only "preaching to the choir." My purpose in writing is similar; I am writing on behalf of Her Majesty's loyal

opposition here since the overwhelming weight of ecclesiastical writing and practice looks at the world of econom-ics, commerce, and markets in quite a different way.

I am confident that good conversation about these issues is possible because an invaluable part of the experience of writing this book came from my request to student members of the Calvin Theological Seminary Social Justice Club if they would be willing to read a penultimate draft and discuss it with me. Herewith my thanks to Bryant De Kruyter, Adrian De Lange, Brandon Haan, Shannon Jamal-Hollemans, Jin Li, Micah Schuurman, and David Zigter-man for your willingness to serve as my loyal opposition. Your openness, hon-esty, and probing questions have made this a better book. It is also better than it would have been without the friendship and contribution of Henry Vander Goot, who brought to our ongoing conversa-

tions over the years about the issues in this book the rare and helpful combination of intellectual/academic gift and successful entrepreneurial experi-ence. Henry's careful reading of my first draft of each chapter was encouraging and constructive. Many of the nuances that are in the final edition need to be credited to his thoughtful interaction with my writing. After I had completed and submitted what I thought of as my final draft, two friends and colleagues, Stephen Grabill of the Acton Institute and Greg Forster of the Kern Family Foundation, read the entire

manuscript and provided really valuable advice for nuance and correction. Though it meant a few more days of work for me, the advice was spot on target and makes the final manuscript much better. I am grateful to God for the sympathetic community and constructive honest advice by way of the many helpful ques-

tions and suggestions I received from all of those mentioned above.
I have dedicated this book to a dear friend, Harry Antonides, whose Christian commitment, dedication to the work of Christian social and political analysis, and courage to speak up for and defend the Reformed faith when it was not easy to do so, remain an inspiration to me. I also want to highlight and acknowledge the many men and women who, like Harry, have been involved with the Christian Labour Association of Canada over the sixty years that CLAC has been an exemplary instrument of social justice in Canada and faithful witness to the importance of faith in the workplace. This Dutch-Can-adian-American Reformed theologian salutes you.
Note to reader: Each chapter is followed by "Discussion Questions" and suggestions "For Further Reading." In lieu of footnotes or endnotes, paren-

thetical references (author, title, and page number) are given in the text.
Though works may be referenced in subsequent chapters, the full bibliographic information will not be repeated but given only in shortened form. For ease of reference, all titles are provided in a final bibliography.

Introduction
"Follow the Money" -What Is Economics All About?
[Everything looks different] when considered from the standpoint of allocating scarce resources which have alternate uses.
Thomas Sowell
The economist comes before his fellow citizens with the bad news of scarcity —as the production of goods increases, so does demand and desire-hence the Kingdom of God will never come to earth through economic means.
Wilhelm Röpke
[Economics is| [njot "gay science," I should say, like some we have heard of; no, a dreary, desolate and, indeed, quite abject and distressing one; what we might call, by way of eminence, the dismal science.
Thomas Carlyle
Cub reporters eager to make their mark in journalism are often told by

veterans on the job to "follow the money." The point of the advice is to encourage investigative journalists not to be satisfied with the obvious and to refuse to accept surface explanations and motivations. While the advice may be sound, it also has the effect of fueling profound cynicism about all human be-havior. It assumes that all noteworthy human motivations are reducible to some kind of financial calculation. After all, if everything finally comes down to inward-looking self-interest, to getting more for oneself, to accumulating wealth or power, very little is left for other motivations that can be described as true, noble, good, and lovely.
When we turn to investigate economics itself-where inward-looking or self-serving profit is thought to be the very point of the activity-suspi-cion and cynicism seem natural and are often intensified. For many, some Christians included, "following the money"

Since we have no choice but to
"follow the money" when we shine our spotlight on economics-money is what most people mistakenly think it's all about—we need to start with a less inflamed attitude. If we are to come to a healthy understanding of work, busi-ness, entrepreneurship, and civic re-sponsibility, we will have to set aside whatever negative feelings we may have about economic life and determine to hold a more neutral posture. So without prejudice or suspicion or preconceived bias, let's examine economic life. With what kinds of human action is economics concerned? I will develop a full answer in a series of propositions that move from general descriptions to more specific. My goal is to arrive at a normative definition, one that leads to human flourishing, recognizing that living in a fallen world means we will never arrive at full and definitive economic shalom in this life.

1. Economics deals with the one aspect or dimension of human behavior that involves exchanging things of value.
Economics is not everything; everything is not economics. We need to state this up front to help us avoid the mistake of reducing all human behavior to economic self-interest. We also need to avoid thinking that all things of value are reducible to a price point. Even the words profit or profitable are not restricted to matters of mammon. Activities and habits that enrich our souls— music lessons, reading good literature, a liberal arts education, etc.—are profitable even when costly from a financial point of view. Economics is not every-thing; everything is not economics; profit is not just about the bottom line.
What is economics about? Economics is concerned with those human ac-

tions involving exchange. Now it is of course true that thanks to our sinful hearts, even the most intimate and personal human interaction can be tainted by economic considerations. A young man in love wants a diamond ring for his beloved; a local shop, Jewels Verne, sells diamond rings. The young man works, saves money, purchases the ring, receives parental blessing, gets on his knees, and "pops the question." The purchase of the ring is economics; "popping the question" surely not. But, what if the young man comes from poor peasant stock and the young lady is a well-to-do heiress? In that case, significant economic considerations could enter into the picture, beginning with concerns the young woman's family might raise about the purity of the young man's motives. In the class-ridden societies of older Europe, such relationships between nobility and commoner were not unheard of, but more often they were

only fodder for "upstairs/downstairs" gossip and tut-tutting. Economics may not be everything, but economics has the possibility of casting its shadow over even the most intimate human re-lationship. Conversely, business people may decide to act in ways that do not maximize profit and make decisions that are not primarily governed by economic self-interest. Different values and ideals, such as love of family, concern about employees, love of community or nation, may override purely economic interests.

To say that everything is not economics does not remove the suspicions altogether and calls for careful discernment and charity. In the case of trying to understand the relation between Christian faith and economics, it requires spiritual discernment and neighbor-love. Christians are supposed to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves" according to our Lord's instruc-

tion (Matt. 10:16). This calls for prudent judgments of charity; we must be appropriately cautious, but Christians violate the love command when they start out with attitudes of suspicion and hostility toward rich people. In economic terms, "keep your eyes on the balance sheets and love your neighbor as your-self."

The example of a young lover purchasing an engagement ring reminds us that "exchanging things of value" is not yet a full definition of economics. It also reminds us that economic activity is not a matter of "gift exchange." Economic activity involves exchange for the sake of outward-looking profit, that is to say, profit or blessing that is considered to be so by all parties to the transaction.

This is an important point. Acts of economic exchange are mutually benefi-cial. That is why they are different from gift exchanges. A gift is gratuitous and generous; it does not expect a return

except a "thank you." When someone gives a "gift" in a calculated gesture to gain profit for self, it has become something quite different—a bribe. There-fore, to fill out our definition we need to enter in the profit motive, understood now in the broad sense as outward-look-ing profit.

2. Economics deals with the one aspect or dimension of human behavior that involves exchanging things of value for the sake of profit.

Speaking of "profit" pushes to the very limit our earlier caution about leaving prejudices and biases behind for a more neutral posture. The word "profit" in our definition almost requires being placed in scare quotes, such is the hostility that it evokes in many people of high moral in-tention. This moral indignation is more than matched by the derision accompanying the term self-interest. A calmer

and more measured response, however, recognizes that while selfishness is indeed sinful, self-interest is essential to our own survival. In fact we humans cannot stay alive without self-regard. Eating healthy food, exercising regularly, and getting sufficient sleep are all self-interested choices made by morally sound people daily. So, the economic act of person X exchanging his valuable possession for person Y's money is no less moral and fitting than choosing to eat vegetables instead of bacon rinds or French fries. In a phrase, profit is not a four-letter word. Neither is self-interest necessarily morally dubious.

Nonetheless, we need to ask further what lends value for profit to an economic activity. Here we take our analysis one additional step and note that the answer is scarcity. As economist Thomas Sowell has pointed out, speaking of economics as the science that studies the way humans produce goods and distribute goods and services is not

enough: "The Garden of Eden was a system for the production and distribution of goods and services, but it was not an economy, because everything was available in unlimited abundance. Without scarcity, there is no need to economize— and therefore no economics" (Basic Eco-nomics, 2). Sowell then follows with the following classic definition of economics from British economist Lionel Rob-bins: Economics is the study of the use of scarce resources which have alternative uses.

INTERLUDE 1

Profit is not the only goal.

A Christian utopian dreamer once foolishly expressed a longing for a world in which General Motors would be interested in building good cars instead of making profits. The matter of profit in business is rather simple: only profitable

businesses survive and are able to do good by providing goods and services to others.

Unprofitable enterprises are inefficient and wasteful; profits are essential to good stewardship. At the same time, however, a Christian business person does need to think about more than profit alone. Business too is to be conducted for the glory of God, for the benefit of God's kingdom.
Financial profit or the famous "bottom line" must never become an idol. This means that some very profitable business ventures—legal but morally dubious-are off limits for those who honor Christ as Lord. In addition, there may be certain types of business that are both legal and moral but reflect values of stewardship that do not promote the kingdom of God.
There are products and services the world really does not need because they provide no human benefits beyond a job and opportunity for consumption. There are times when entrepreneurs also need to say no. Pet rocks, anyone? Business people

are stewards of all that God entrusts to their care and, as they face choices, it is the well-being of God's kingdom that must take precedence over profits alone.
This is a challenge and responsibility not unique to those in business; every disciple of Christ, no matter what his or her vo-cation, faces such lordship choices. Self-centered and self-serving choices are as serious a problem in the academy, in the helping professions, and, yes, even in the church, as they are in business.
Economists Victor Claar and Robin Klay note that awareness of scarcity is also a matter of Christian wisdom:
"One of the fundamental assumptions economists make about human activity is that we are limited in our choices by scarce time, resources and know-ledge. Christians acknowledge that real-ity." Furthermore, "although Christians are called to have 'faith that can move mountains, they are taught not to defy

gravity or tempt God by jumping from rooftops. Likewise, they would court physical and spiritual danger if they ignored real limits to their material and financial resources" (Economics in Christian Perspective, 15).
When we speak of "scarce resources that have alternative uses," we link economics to an important biblical theme
—stewardship. Stewardship is a favorite theme of environmentalists—and properly so-but all too often forgotten is that stewardship involves use. Stewardship does not mean, in the first place, leaving God's creation alone to be preserved in its pristine form. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof" (Ps.
24:1), but he has also given it to those who fear him with the promise that
"his soul shall abide in well-being, and his offspring shall inherit the land" (Ps.
25:13). This leads us to our third formu-lation:

3. Economics deals with the one aspect or dimension of human behavior that involves stewardly exchanging scarce things of value for the sake of profit.

There is one additional normative element that needs to be added and will serve as a segue to the next chapter. The assumption in the preceding discussion has been that the mutually beneficial exchanges we are speaking of are not coerced but those of free and responsible human moral agents. Theft is an economic activity of sorts involving "scarce things of value," but it does not involve mutual exchange for profit. Theft is a zero-sum exchange; economics is not.

This point is often overlooked by critics of free enterprise. The world economy is often portrayed, especially in ecumenical ecclesiastical pronouncements such as the World Communion of Reformed

Churches' Accra Confession, as pure exploitation of the weak by the powerful, as a plundering of the poor by the rich.

While it is undeniable that such exploitation has taken and does take place, it is simply untrue that free enterprise in a free and democratic society is a zero-sum exchange. We will forego a more complete look at this question until a later chapter, but we note it here so that we can come to our fourth formulation.

4. Economics is that study of the one aspect or dimension of human behavior that involves stewardly exchanging, by free moral agents, scarce things of value for the sake of profit.

Finally, in the interest of precision, the word "study" in our definition may be too general; we should introduce the notion of "science." A businessman who studies the demograph-

ics and known needs of his community, the goods offered by his competitor, the likelihood of profits, the potential risks, and so forth, is studying but, technically speaking, he is not yet an economist. The parallel here is with the vocation of theologian. In a rudimentary sense, all thoughtful, reflective Christians are amateur theologians.

The vocation of theologian requires disciplined study, mastery of the tradition and traditions of the church's theological masters, and a more or less full-time dedication to the theological task. The same is true for the vocation or profession of an economist. This volume is neither a work of pure theology nor of pure economics; it is a work of reflection on matters of faith, eco-nomics, work, and civic responsibility.

I will be using the fruit of economists along with that of Christian theolo-gians, ethicists, and social thinkers to set forth a vision of flourishing life in

the economic realm. But, I am proceeding from the conviction that the more general and broader understanding of economics is helpful here because even economics as a discipline is not in the first place a highly specialized and even mathematically

quantifiable science but a practical and moral sci-ence. As Aristotle noted in his Nicom-achean Ethics, practical sciences apply reason to praxis, to human action. This makes them far less exact than, say the physical sciences-"due to the contingency of human action deriving from its freedom and singularity" (Ricardo F. Crespo, "Controversy: Is Economics a Moral Science?" 202)-and makes prudential wisdom the most important quality of the practical scientist.
Furthermore, "since human action is essentially free," it is "essentially mor-al" (Ibid.). This leads us to our fifth and final, normative definition of econom-ics.

5. Economics is that practical and moral scientific study of the one aspect or dimension of human behavior that involves stewardly exchanging, by free moral agents, scarce things of value for the sake of profit.
This is a bare-bones definition of economics that does not include many things that go into economic activ-ity, such as allocation and limits of resources, production and wages, mar-kets, prices, demand and supply, and the list goes on. Many of these topics— albeit in a broad, general manner-will be addressed in the later chapters of this book in the context of key themes arising from Christian confession and com-mitment. The first part and next four chapters of this book are dedicated to exploring four of those key themes.

Discussion Questions
1. Prior to reading this chapter, did you think of the modern global economy in generally positive or negative terms?
Why? Did the way this chapter defined economics change your view?

1. What are the most pressing questions you have about the economy and Christian discipleship?
2. Why is it important to distinguish in-ward-looking profit from -outward-look-ing profit?
3. Using the apostle Paul's wise counsel that ""All things are lawful for me,' but not all things are helpful" (1 Cor. 6:12), can you think of any economic activity that may be legal and moral but is inad-visable for Christians?
4. Are you aware of a movement among younger evangelical Christians known as the "new asceticism"? What is your opinion of it? Do you favor "simple liv-ing"?
5. What specific "self" sins are the temptations of your vocation/profession?